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ABSTRACT

This 25-page "Action Guide" is accompanied by a compact disk that presents sound bites from contemporary rock musicians about their experiences with violence and rage. This interview material is followed by current popular hit songs by Lauryn Hill, Dave Matthews Band, Everclear, Backstreet Boys, Alanis Morissette, and Tori Amos. Many musicians state how music and writing have given them alternative ways to deal with their feelings of rage. The Action Guide includes facts about violence and gives five ways adolescents can help take a stand against violence. These include using conflict resolution, mentoring or finding a role model, using artistic responses to violence, participating in youth crime watch, and advocating against acts of violence. (Contains 36 Web site resources.) (JDM)

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fight for your rights:
take a stand against violence

ACTION GUIDE

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YOUTH VIOLENCE: the facts

- 1 in 12 high schoolers is threatened or injured with a weapon each year.
- In 1996, 5 percent of all 12th graders reported that they had been injured with a weapon during their previous year at school.
- But fewer than 1% of violent deaths of children occur on school grounds.
- In 1996, kids aged 12-18 were the victims of over 900,000 serious violent crimes.
- 1 in 8 male teenagers carries a weapon for protection.
- Violent juvenile crime peaks during the after-school hours.

For more information on youth violence, contact:

FightForYourRights.MTV.com
The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the US Department of Justice at (800) 638-8736 or www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org
Or the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program at the US Department of Education at (202) 260-3954 or www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS

YOUTH VIOLENCE: the context

What causes someone to punch, kick, stab, or fire a gun at someone else? In short, what makes a person violent?

While there's no simple answer to that question, violent people are often brought up in violent homes or neighborhoods—places where violence is not only an everyday occurrence but an accepted method of communication.

Young people from such environments may grow up angry. And not having been taught to communicate peacefully, they express their anger the only way they know how—through violent actions.

Pressure from friends and others can also play a role in causing an otherwise mellow person to blow his or her top. When taunted, challenged, or "dissed" by someone, young people sometimes feel the only way to maintain respect is through a violent response.

Other factors that compound a young person's chances of committing a violent act might include:

- easy access to weapons, especially handguns
- early involvement with drugs and alcohol

That's a little bit about the problem. To find out how you can become part of the solution, read on...

For more information on the Warnings Signs of violent behavior, contact the American Psychological Association at 800-268-0078 for your free Guide.

the solutions

The good news is that there are solutions to youth violence. And young people have the right, the responsibility, and the power to find ways of their own to keep the peace. In fact, 7 in 10 teenagers already participate in some kind of volunteer program and nearly 9 out of 10 are interested in participating in community programs that could help prevent crime and violence.

Here are five ways, among many, that young people are taking a stand against violence on their own terms, along with the info on how you can get involved.

Call the Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at (800) 638-8736 for "Youth in Action" fact sheets and bulletins on the many other ways you can get involved with fighting crime. Or call the National Crime Prevention Council at (800) 722-TEENS.

1 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

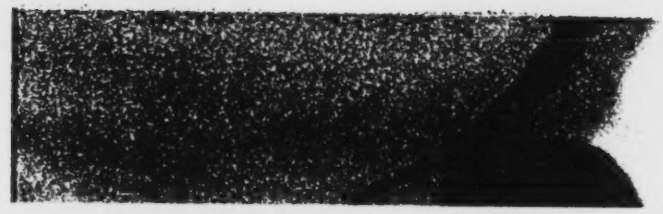
Two high school seniors get into an argument over a pair of sneakers. An hour later one is dead from a gun shot to the head. The other is taken away in handcuffs.

We've all heard stories of how simple disputes suddenly explode—sometimes with tragic results. But how can this be avoided?

A peacemaker, or "third party", can help young people work out disagreements before they become explosive. And it's not uncommon for a teacher or parent to take on that role.

But arguments often take place away from traditional authorities, like during pickup basketball games, or at parties, at the mall, or on the street. At those times, you can assume the role of peacemaker, negotiator, or mediator to keep a situation under control.

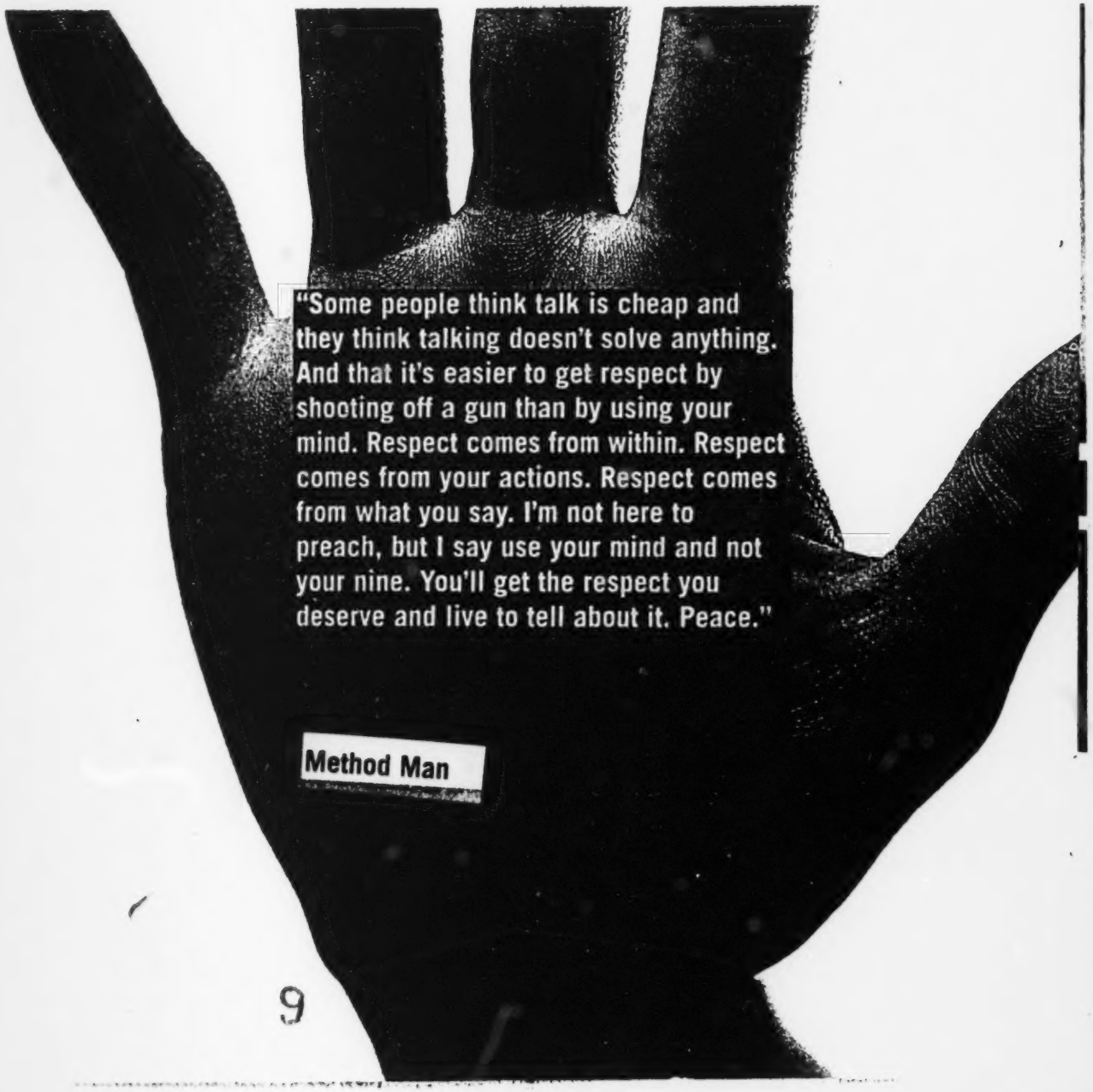
Encouraging angry people to talk things over can take a lot of courage, especially when it seems like it's none of your business. But stopping violence is everyone's problem, and diffusing disputes is a lot easier with the right training. That's where conflict resolution comes in. It teaches you the do's and don'ts of talking it out and keeping the peace between others. Conflict resolution also teaches you to keep your cool if you find yourself in a potentially explosive dispute of your own.

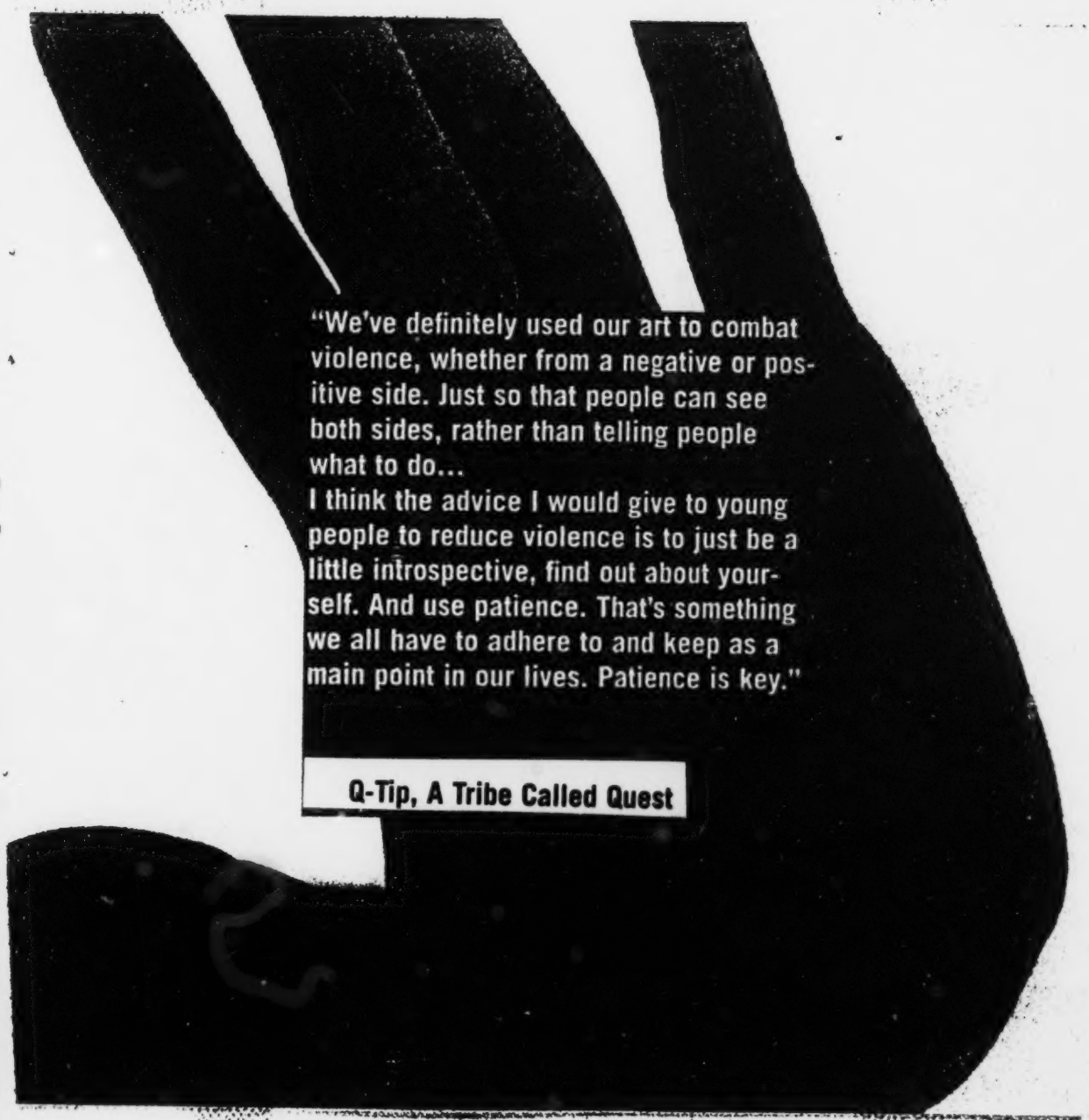


To learn more or to find a program in your community that can offer you free conflict resolution opportunities, contact:

The National Center for Conflict Resolution Education
in collaboration with Conflict Resolution Education Network
(CREnet) (Toll free) 1-877-24-PEACE or www.nccre.org

The E-CD/PEACE Process, an interactive CD ROM, invites youth to learn how to be a peacemaker through the E-CD experience...


"Some people think talk is cheap and they think talking doesn't solve anything. And that it's easier to get respect by shooting off a gun than by using your mind. Respect comes from within. Respect comes from your actions. Respect comes from what you say. I'm not here to preach, but I say use your mind and not your nine. You'll get the respect you deserve and live to tell about it. Peace."
Method Man


"We've definitely used our art to combat violence, whether from a negative or positive side. Just so that people can see both sides, rather than telling people what to do...
I think the advice I would give to young people to reduce violence is to just be a little introspective, find out about yourself. And use patience. That's something we all have to adhere to and keep as a main point in our lives. Patience is key."
Q-Tip, A Tribe Called Quest

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2 MENTORING

Often what a kid growing up needs more than anything else is a person in his or her life who can serve as an ally or role model. Someone who can show them that no matter what the question, violence is not the answer.

A mentor is a responsible and caring person who provides a child or teenager guidance in academic, professional or personal areas of life. Often, a mentor can enhance a young person's sense of self-confidence and reduce his or her chances of committing violent acts.

Traditionally, a mentor relationship has meant getting together about once a week for a few hours at a time. But a mentor can give as little as a few hours a month. Mentoring can be done at work, at a school or community center, on a lunch break, on the weekend, or even by e-mail. The more time you spend together, the more likely you are to make a difference. "I feel so lucky and proud of myself," says Tammy, a 9th grader who has been in a mentoring program for two years. "Having a mentor means there is always someone who will talk to you in good times and in bad."

It's a fact that young people with mentors are less likely to engage in violence, but the benefits of mentoring aren't just limited to youth. For Christopher, 24, the opportunity to serve as a big brother was what attracted him. "I wanted to have that role for somebody," he says. "I think that through my experiences I was able to share with him and he was able to share with me. He was going through some of the same problems I had."

If you'd like to be a mentor to a younger person, the organizations below can help you find a program in your community or find a mentor for yourself:

America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth
(Toll-free) 1-888-55-YOUTH or
www.americaspromise.org

Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
(215) 567-7000 or www.bbbsa.org

Department of Justice National
Mentoring Web Site
www.nwrel.org/mentoring/index.html

The National Mentoring Partnership
www.mentoring.org

Save The Children
(Toll-free) 1-877-BE-A-MENTOR
www.savethechildren.org/mentors

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You may have a creative talent—painting, writing, sculpture, drama, rapping, singing, or playing an instrument—that can help change the way others feel about violence.

3 ARTISTIC RESPONSES TO VIOLENCE

Everyone gets angry sometimes. But unlike most of us, people who commit violent acts often have no outlet for their anger, other than striking out at the world.

You may have a creative talent—painting, writing, sculpture, drama, rapping, singing, or playing an instrument—that can help change the way others feel about violence.

Arts programs also offer young people the opportunity to learn useful skills and build self-confidence. "Through painting," says Nelson, 15, a participant in a local arts program, "I find that I have choices and that I can change. I can do things about my life." Hundreds of arts programs around the country tap into the immense energy of young people and allow them to express themselves in productive ways. Ray, 16, joined a playwriting program six years ago which helped to keep him out of trouble. "Before I was in this program I was pretty bad," he says. "I used to get into a lot of fights and pick on kids. But since I started writing I look at other kids and the world differently."

For general information on arts programs in your area or ideas for ways to stop violence with art, contact one of the following organizations:

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies
(Toll-free) 1-888-NASAA60
www.nasaa-arts.org

Coming Up Taller
www.cominguptaller.org

Creative Partnerships for Prevention
www.cpprev.org

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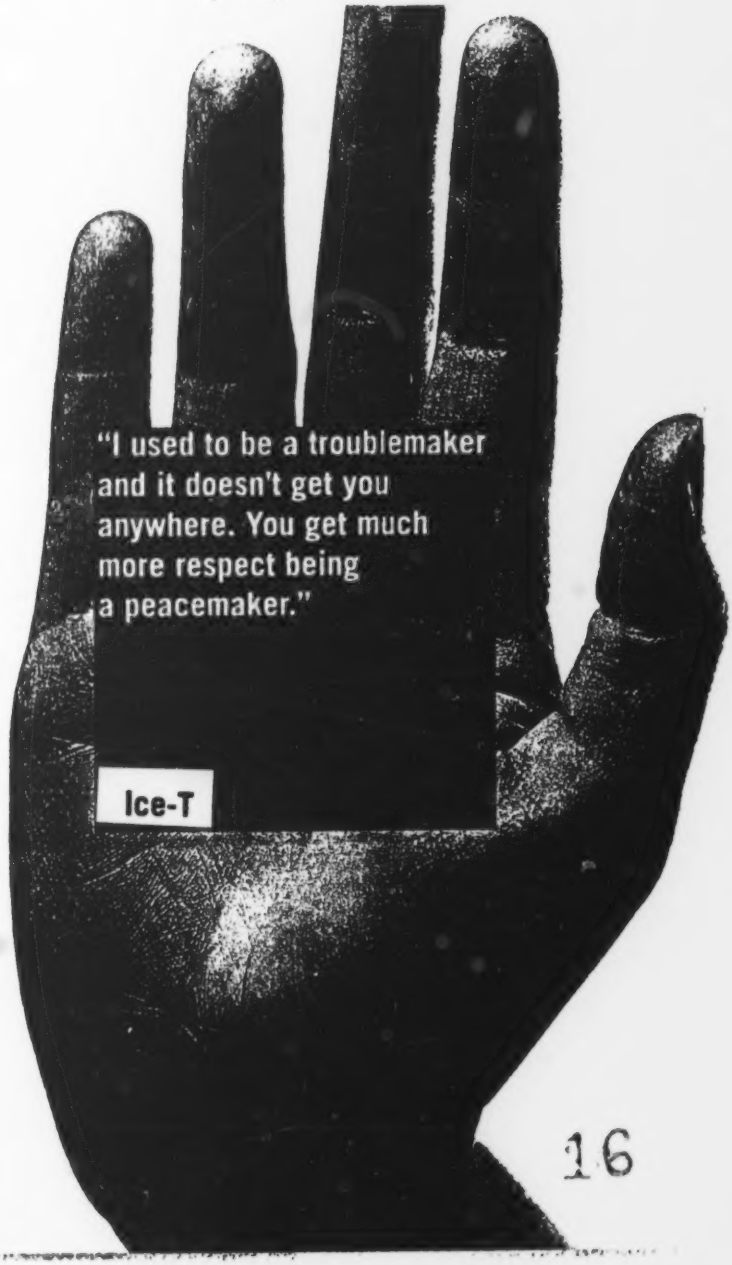
"If you're feeling like you have a rage inside of you, you need to talk it out instead of beating it out. You'll be a lot better off and so will the other person."
Howie D, Backstreet Boys


"I used to be a troublemaker and it doesn't get you anywhere. You get much more respect being a peacemaker."
Ice-T

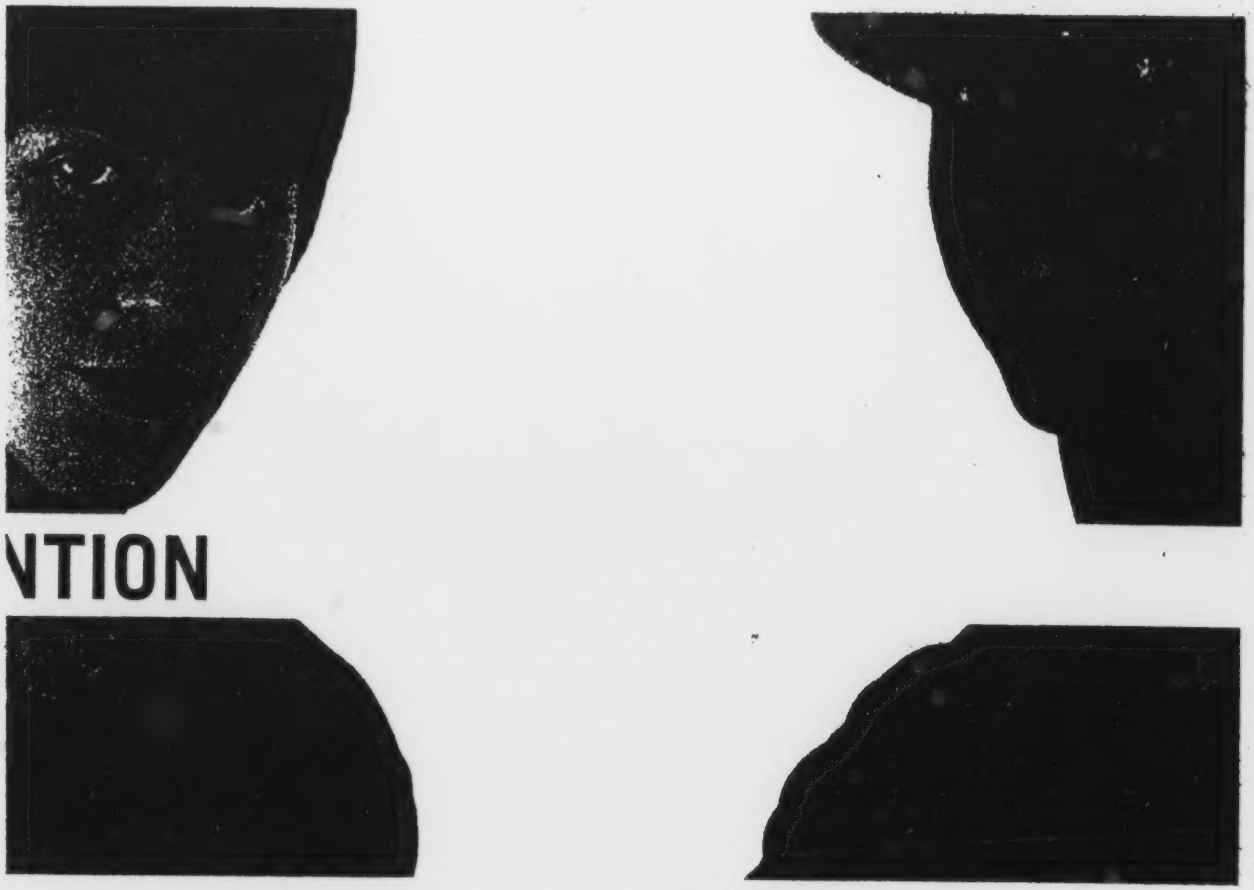
Youth Crime Watch programs empower young people to take an active role in making their schools or communities safer places.

4 YOUTH CRIME WATCH / PREVE

In the crime watch program at South West Junior High in Miami, patrol members are let out of class a few minutes early to observe specific locations, such as where the bicycles are locked up. If student patrols witness a crime, they immediately report the incident to teachers or the police. Youth crime watch patrols are also trained in conflict resolution so they can help to diffuse conflicts before they get out of hand.

But young people don't have to confine their crime watch and prevention activities to the schools. Town Watch, one of America's most popular local crime prevention programs, organizes citizens in individual neighborhoods to keep an eye out for criminal activities and report them to local police.

Young people also have the option of voicing their concerns about crime and safety directly to law enforcement officials in their area. A number of young people have joined forces with local police to create youth-cop partnerships that open lines of communication.



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To find out how you can get involved, contact one of the following:

Youth Crime Watch of America
(Toll-free) 1-877-225-YCWA or www.ycwa.org

National Crime Prevention Council
1-800-722-TEENS or www.weprevent.org

National Association of Town Watch
1-800-648-3688 or www.natw.org

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5 ADVOCACY

As you know by now, young people are often affected by acts of violence. Yet too often they do not get involved in determining the crime laws and policies that affect them. If you think that's wrong, then advocacy is probably right for you.

Advocacy can mean writing your local representatives with your ideas about how to reduce youth violence. It can also mean getting involved with national organizations like the National Youth Network which consists of youth leaders from across the country who meet regularly and discuss ways of combating youth-oriented problems like violence. "Networking is phenomenal. Not only does it give us the opportunity to voice our ideas and opinions, but it allows us to share our experiences and knowledge with others who have the power to make changes," says Jennifer who has taken part in the network's meetings.

In some states, young people have produced radio public service announcements that send anti-violence messages to their peers. But there are numerous other opportunities to advocate for change as well.

To find ways you can get involved, contact the organizations below:

Rock the Vote
(310) 237-2000 or www.rockthevote.org
Rock the Vote is a national organization dedicated to promoting freedom of expression and helping young people realize and use their power to effect change in the civic and political lives of their communities.

PAX
(Toll-free) 1-877-PAX-3569 or www.paxusa.org
Committed to reducing gun violence, Pax is a national organization that uses communication and media strategies in support of grassroots public outreach efforts to create public awareness about gun violence.

The National Youth Network
www.usdoj.gov/kidspage/getinvolved
Sponsored by the US Department of Justice, The National Youth Network provides young people with a unique opportunity to share perspectives with other teenagers on issues related to delinquency prevention and juvenile justice.

The National Network for Youth
www.nn4youth.org or (202) 783-7949
The National Network for Youth has been a leader in addressing the challenges facing America's young people and their families for over 22 years. With direct members and regional and state constituents, the National Network works to fulfill its mission: to ensure that young people can be safe and grow up to lead healthy and productive lives.

The National Youth in Action Campaign
www.youthlink.org
National Youth in Action Campaign is a national organization that works with 36,000 schools and 1,800 universities across the country to provide program and financial support for young people who want to take the initiative on improving their communities and the country.

Additional Resources

FightForYourRights.MTV.com

Advocacy
The Center to Prevent Handgun Violence
www.handguncontrol.org

Coalition to Stop Gun Violence
www.gunfree.org or call (202) 530-0340

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids
www.fightcrime.org

Join Together Online
www.jointogether.org

The National Organization for Women
www.now.org/issues/violence

Domestic Violence/Violence Against Women
The American Bar Association
Commission on Domestic Violence
www.abanet.org/domviol/

Center for the Prevention of
Sexual and Domestic Violence
www.cpsdv.org or (206) 634-1903

The Family Violence Prevention Fund
www.fvpf.org or call the National Domestic
Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
www.ncadv.org

Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN)
1-800-656-HOPE or www.rainn.org

Gay and Lesbian Youth
The Anti-Violence Project
www.avp.org or call the Crisis Line: (212) 714-1141

The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network
www.glsen.org or call (212) 727-0135

National Youth Advocacy Coalition
(202) 319-7596 or nyac@nyacyouth.org

The Trevor Line at the Suicide Prevention Center
(800) 850-8078

Youth Resource
www.youthresource.com

Hate Crimes
The Anti-Defamation League
www.adl.org

Facing History and Ourselves National Foundation
www.facing.org

The Southern Poverty Law Center
www.splcenter.org

Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance
Task Force Against Hate
1-800-900-9036
www.wiesenthal.com

Safe Schools
Center for the Prevention of School Violence
(800) 299-6054

Gang Resistance Education And Training Program
www.atf.treas.gov/great

National Alliance for Safe Schools
(301) 935-6063 or www.safeschools.org

National Resource Center for Safe Schools
www.nwrel.org/safe or safeschools@nwrel.org

Statistics
Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence
www.colorado.edu/cspv/ or (303) 492-8465

US Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics,
Crime and Victim Statistics
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict.htm

US Department of Justice, Office of
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
(800) 638-8736 or www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org

US Department of Education,
National Center for Education Studies
nces.ed.gov

1998 Annual Report on School Safety
at www.ed.gov/pubs/AnnSchoolRept98 or by calling
toll-free (877) 4ED-PUBS

Others
The American Psychological Association
Call the APA for -Warning Signs-, a free guide to recognizing potentially violent behavior in your peers and yourself, and what to do about it.
(800) 268-0078

Boys and Girls Clubs of America
www.bgca.org

The Bureau For At-Risk Youth
www.at-risk.com or 1-800-99-YOUTH

KidsCampaigns
www.kidscampaigns.org

SHINE
www.shinesite.org

Stop the Violence, Face the Music
Counseling hotline: (toll-free)
(888) 647-STOP

Youth Service America
www.servenet.org or (202) 296-2992

Thank You

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Published by Sony/ATV Tunes LLC (ASCAP)
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Words and Music by David J. Matthews
Performed by Dave Matthews Band
Published by Colden Grey Ltd. (ASCAP)
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"Father of Mine (Special Pop Mix)"
Written by Alexakis/Everclear
Performed by Everclear
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Written by Max Martin and Herbie Crichlow
Performed by Backstreet Boys
Published by Zomba Enterprises, Inc. (ASCAP)
Backstreet Boys appear courtesy of Jive Records

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Written and Performed by Alanis Morissette
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Music performed by Carlin Randolph, David Musial and Ike Lee
Vocals by Forever Chozen
Rap by The Creators
Engineered and Mixed by David Musial Forever Chozen
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"i"
Words and music by Medichi
Music performed by David Musial, Yaz Shehab and Medichi
Rap by Medichi Engineered and Mixed by David Musial
Produced by Medichi and David Musial
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take a stand against violence

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